

Judaism, christianity, and indigenous religion

[Religion](#), [Christianity](#)



Vanessa Loaiza Dr. Religion 31 September 2010 Time Concepts on the Judaism, Christianity, and Indigenous religion The concept of time is full of mystery, by instinct we feel that time cannot be stopped. We all exist in time, and everything is subject to time. It seems obvious that because we live in time, it is the prime measure of existence.

As assumed by many philosophical and religious schools, no beginning or end can be attributed to time. To the different concepts of time we have sacred time and religious time. They come closest to what may be called cosmic time: the big time of the complete whole of the cosmic reality. Sacred time is the past, present and future collapsed in one eternal now making for our connectedness. Religious time is the time that is respected on religious grounds. It is usually bound to natural order by means of calendars, sundials and/or clock (-schedules). In the Jewish religion, Judaism, Jews have never perceived time as progressive, but rather as a fragmented line.

Its parts-past, present, and future-were not perceived as a continuous process in which one stage is a sequel to its antecedents. The Past was the era of glory, philosophically-inclined Jews in the Middle Ages perceived themselves as inferior in virtue to preceding generations. This inferiority complex was not simply a reflection of the general medieval view of history as an ongoing process, but rather a specific Jewish belief that the ancient Hebrews had the advantage of political independence in their own land, while the spiritual resources of "modern" Jews were depleted in exile and dispersion. The Present was the long era of Exile, Its beginning was a well-defined point in time; the destruction of the Second Temple, "but its end was shrouded in mist" (Lyman 15), as rabbinical Judaism rejected all

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eschatological calculations or detailed descriptions of the End of Days. Whether the trials and tribulations of exile were represented as part of the divine plan, or, on the contrary, as evidence of God's abdication, the "present" was in any event just an insignificant interlude. The Jewish perception of the Future was most revealing of all; an impatient expectation for imminent cosmic upheaval which would transform the nature of Jewish existence was combined with resignation-acceptance that these events might be postponed until the end of time. It is irrelevant whether this near-distant future was perceived as a return to the past or as an era which would transcend all that has ever been; whether it would be attained by an apocalyptic lead to a historical time through divine intervention, or rather as stipulated by "realistic" messianism, accomplished by human efforts alone and not very different from present reality.

The thrust of the matter is that Judaism adopted a view of the future which was a compromise between two seemingly incompatible attitudes: on the one hand: an eschatology which promised deliverance in the foreseeable future, and a strategy designed to ensure the evasion of a history of suffering by posing the question of "how" rather than "when," on the other. This compromise formula appears to be powerful enough to become a fixed element in Jewish culture: a frantic search for signs of imminent redemption combined with caution and suspicion which prevented bitter disillusionment in the face of delay. In Judaism, no one has to argue in favor of survival; there is nothing else if one does not survive. In contrast to the ancient Greek, who "thought that the universe includes the even stronger idea of cycle time according to which not only the cosmological processes but all

individual destinies are repeated in every detail in time” (OHRSTROM 896).
As for Jewish and Christian philosophers, the idea of cyclic time leaves no room for genuine progress and final salvation.